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ABSTRACT

Ten games and exercises designed to help handicapped children express feelings, develop trust and cooperation, and increase their body awareness and imagination are presented. Activities are explained to have been field tested in special education classes of Project PASE (Programs in the Arts for Special Education). Following a brief introduction which stresses the importance of structure and the need for play, the activities are described. Games include a variety of tasks to be performed with a stretch jersey loop and activities in which students act out narratives. Each description includes a list of objectives and a discussion of possible adaptations. (CL)

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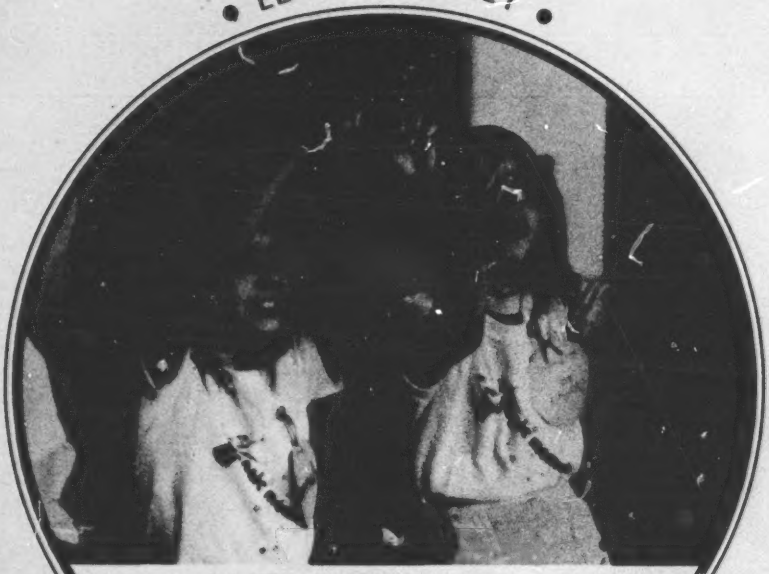

. . . AND A TIME TO PLAY

Creative drama activities with special children

EC 140663

". . . AND A TIME TO PLAY"

Edward Lilley

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Prepared for:

Programs in the Arts for Special Education
Central Intermediate Unit #10
Philipsburg, PA 16866
1979-80

About the Author

Edward Lilley is an expressive arts expert who serves as a consultant to numerous educational agencies throughout the state of Pennsylvania and the nation. During 1979-80, Mr. Liliey served as the Expressive Play Consultant for Programs in the Arts for Special Education (Project PASE) of Central Intermediate Unit #10. As consultant, Mr. Lilley conducted creative drama — expressive play workshops for special education teachers and served as a classroom consultant to those teachers, working directly with special education students in expressive play activities in the schools.

PROJECT PASE

Programs in the Arts for Special Education (Project PASE) was designed and initiated through Title IV-C funding in 1979. The Project was a collaborative endeavor of the Arts in Education Program and the Special Education Program of Intermediate Unit #10. The Project specifically was designed to provide local handicapped students and their teachers with intense involvement in the arts of creative drama (1979-80), music (1980-81), and visual arts (1981-82) through in-service education for teachers, arts consultants in the classroom, and utilization of arts resources in and outside of the classroom environment. The project provides four basic services:

(1) In-Service Education

The workshop instruction stresses techniques for teaching with arts. The instruction is designed to develop ability to diagnose the aesthetic needs of students and to help teachers devise instructional objectives involving the arts in accordance with IEP guidelines.

(2) Traveling Arts Consultant

In addition to the in-service workshops, teachers participating in Project PASE also receive other services. One major service is a visiting classroom consultant to work directly with students in the classroom setting. These activities in the classes provide a flexible demonstration format for teachers since all activities are easily adaptable to any handicapping condition and age level.

(3) Arts Resources for Special Education

The project staff identify and infuse quality arts resources into identified special education classes. Arts resources (individual artists, performers, craftsmen) are implemented directly into self-contained special education classrooms, or special education students may participate in performances and events outside the classroom in a more mainstreamed environment.

(4) Special Arts Festival

Special arts events are developed by the Project staff. The activities emphasize participation by handicapped students in creative activities in various arts media and in performances and exhibits by handicapped students.

Introduction

Background to the Creative Play Games and Exercises

A large portion of the knowledge we acquire in a lifetime is gained through exploration and discovery. In the early years, we accumulate a gigantic warehouse of sensory information. Later we use that sensory knowledge to help us to conceptualize and "understand" the world.

Children (handicapped or non-handicapped) can and do discover the world through "play." Play provides a natural vehicle through which the child can acquire sensory information and can "try out" new ideas. Creative play can tap the natural exploratory drives of young children and direct children to a new awareness of themselves and their surrounding world.

There is something compelling about good play. Something which asks the best of us. To play the giant, we must be aware of our voice and body. To play a game well, we must listen and remember. Even when it seems impossible, we must wait our turn. Even though we think we will die of fright, we find courage. And it feels good to growl and snarl. Nobody could believe that we all moved together and slowly! We are relaxed, yet ready. We are united in a common cause. We are probably at the peak of our capabilities.

Creative drama (or the games, exercises, stories, etc., which make up expressive play) promises that a group will explore different behaviors, new voices, new ways to look at things. It is expansive. Drama is all too often overlooked as a medium in which a handicapped child might learn new concepts or gain information; yet, it is the medium in which we *all* learned the most monumental and basic tasks of our lives. We practiced, tried out, rehearsed, reviewed, all within the context of play.

There is a rush to get Sarah "caught up!" There is so much that she must learn before next year. She does not "catch on" the way the ot do: she is handicapped. Would it be revolutionary to push back the desks, put the flash cards away, and play "store" or "march to the zoo?" It is time to dignify the merits of play and place it alongside other more conventional teaching modes.

Work and play need not represent opposite roles in education for the handicapped. *Play is child's work.* The "work" we as educators consider important can most often be accomplished in an atmosphere of play. The spirit of a game can be the basis for learning all that we care about most.

Children at play are intense in concentration. Playing children are enthusiastic, curious, highly motivated, and possibly at the "peak" of their intellectual spirit and physical powers. Would we not, as educators, love to focus that concentration, to harness that motivation and spirit toward a learning task which we have designed?

We can: bring play into the classroom! Provide a time and place for play during the daily schedule in which children can be encouraged to find out how it feels to use their voices in a "big" way or to find out what their bodies can do through play. Provide play opportunities for children to explore new ways to express themselves, alternatives to the way they usually behave, new ways to participate with

others. Provide a structure, safeguards, guidance, and reinforcements for success in play experiences, and laughter and an enthusiasm and willingness to learn with pervade the classroom.

The following games or exercises have been "field-tested" with students of all ages and abilities. They have been found to be a source of joy and the basis for "serious learning." They deal with feelings, emotions, fantasies, and a wide range of experience to which all people respond. Most of these exercises or games grew out of needs of specific children. There is nothing magical or sacred about their formula. My hope is that they can be the beginning — a springboard for all the other ideas which await birth in you. Please adapt these exercises and create others of your own which suit the needs of your students. These activities are intended to awaken in you the pleasant memories of your own play and the awareness of the power to play and its use in helping people grow.

Give creative play a try! Try a play activity that is simple and brief. Build in the controls (the structure). Understand that, if you "wind children up," you cannot turn off the switch and expect children to stop. You must include a "winding down activity" as part of the play experience. You will discover that some of the games energize and excite students while others relax them. Choose and play accordingly. Plan carefully so that your initial venture into creative play will be a successful one for you and your students. Do *not* try too much at once!

Creative play can have a separate time in the school schedule, or it can be an addition to a lesson or unit. It can grow out of a story or a real-life experience of a student. It can be used as a reward.

Creative play can happen "only in a specified spot" in the room, or it can occur anywhere; the choice is yours. Early experiences can be tried with students at their desks until you feel safe enough and the children seem controlled enough to play in a larger space.

Rules of the games or exercises must be clear, often stated again and again. Learning to deal with the rules of a game helps children learn to cooperate. Rules to the exercise may be approached, not as a restriction to participation in play, but as a challenge which when successfully executed makes the game fun and provides safety in the process of play.

Expect some student hyperactivity and testing of controls in initial play experiences. Children who cannot follow the rules, however, may not be testing you. Rather, they may simply be saying in their behavior, "I cannot do this yet." Gently remind them of a rule; ask if they *can* follow. If they prove that they cannot, request that they sit and watch until they are ready to try again.

Also allow for the possibility that some children may find creative play too threatening to join in right away. Children *do* learn from observing others, even for long periods of time. They should be invited to participate once or twice in a session then should be allowed to observe until another time.

Some adults are uncomfortable dealing with themes or subjects which create anxiety in children. Often books which discuss "scary" things are avoided. The avoidance may reinforce the fear and the confusion of children. ***Play is a healer.*** It

allows us, while in safe confines, to look at and explore the "whys and hows" of those frightful things and eventually gives us some mastery over our feelings about them. Children universally play out their fears and concerns. We can aid them by showing that we do not fear to tread there and that we will hold their hands and face the wails that keep them from unfolding, going forward, putting out the next leaf, and eventually embracing that marvelous untrapped treasure-realm called fantasy.

Bon Voyage!

Edward Lilley
August 1980

CREATIVE PLAY GAMES AND EXERCISES

The following activities were designed by Edward Lilley and field-tested in identified special education classes of Project PASE during 1979-80.

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GAMES WITH A STRETCH JERSEY LOOP

TO DEVELOP: *Cooperation
*Awareness of self and others
*Self-control
*Release of Tension
*Concentration (attention span)
*Perceptual Motor Skills

The stretch loop is made from swim-wear jersey, cut into strips (approximately 3 inches wide) as long as the material. These strips are then tied together until they form a circle large enough for all the children involved to hold on to as they are sitting cross-legged in a circle. There are varying grades or qualities of jersey available. The jersey should have two-way stretch and should be of a quality which will endure some rough treatment. The type used in leotards or swim wear is appropriate and often can be bought as remnants at fabric outlets.

1. Row your Boat

Everyone moves the loop in a rowing motion while singing "Row, Row, Row Your Boat."

Row it fast — sing and row faster and faster. Row it slow — sing and row until you all run down.

2. And Can You Stop?

While everyone does a rolling or tilting rhythm (while holding the loop), the leader chants "and . . . can you *stop*!?" Everyone must hold their pose in a freeze until released by leader.

3. I'm Gonna Put This Loop

Leader chants "I'm gonna put the loop on my nose." (touching rope to nose) The students repeat the phrase and the action.

1. on my chin
2. on my neck
3. on my chest
4. on my belly
5. on my knees
6. on my toes
7. on my nose
8. on my toes
9. on my nose
10. up in the air
11. on my hair
12. behind my head, etc.

4. Siren

Everyone starts while holding the loop on the floor and lifts up while singing u-u-u-p on a sliding scale. (Like a siren.) Leader calls, "Hold it. Hold it up. Hold it up, and . . . ." Coming down, everyone sings "Do-o-o-wn (until the rope touches the floor with everyone shouting "Boom!").

5. Washing Machine

Let's make a washing machine with this rope. We'll all hang on with two hands and swing our arms around to the right and round to the left and Shoosh, Shoosh, Shoosh, Shoosh, Shoosh! This is the way we wash our clothes, wash our clothes. Shoosh, Shoosh, Shoosh, *And* . . . can we stop?! Time for the spin cycle. Let's pusn in the button that says spin (push) and off it goes. Pass the rope, around and around. Keep it moving. Don't hang on; pass your handful to your neighbor. Faster, faster, pass it around. Rinse and spin. Spin and spin. And . . . can you *stop*?! Does anyone have a knot between his two hands? You *do:* That's very good luck! The knot is a butterfly that comes to land in your hair. Let's see you put the knot in your hair. You're so lucky! Let's spin it again and, this time, try not to get caught with a knot, because now the knot is a wart that grows on your nose. Let's push the spin button. Round and round, keep it going, faster, faster and . . . can you *stop?!* Did anyone get a knot? Ah, oh, two people got stuck with knots. Let's see them on your noses. All right, this time if you catch a knot, you are rich, because the knot is a huge diamond ring. So, let's push the button for spin and pass it on, faster, faster, *and . . . can you stop?!* Who got a knot? Let's see them on your fingers. Oh my, how beautiful! What else do you think these knots look like? What else could we pretend. . .

Other Options

The knots can be spiders found in your soup, bats, fancy bows on presents, hundred dollar bills, or funny moustaches.

Now let's make the circle bigger. Move way back and hold on to the rope with both hands. If we all let this go, do you know what would happen? Right, it would land in the middle. If you let go and I didn't, where would it land? So I am going to say, "Get ready, get set . . . open up those hands, and let's go!" It should land right in the middle if we all let go at once. If you hang on too long, we'll know, because it will land in your lap . . . so listen closely. Are you ready, get set, open up those hands, and let *go!!!*

There are endless ways to let the rope go. (Hook arms underneath and drop arms or put the rope behind heads and drop heads, or put one foot over and lift foot, or put it behind your back and bend over.) This gives the children a chance to "let go" of the rope *and* the game in order to bring the session to a close.

BIG FEELINGS — LITTLE FEELINGS

TO DEVELOP: *Observation Skills (listening, seeing)
*Imitation (doing the same)
*Cooperation
*Success
*Self-Control
*Awareness of Self and Others
*Expressive Skills (facial expression — body language)

The following game can be played at desks or tables, sitting or standing in a circle. It is excellent as a warm-up. People of all ages and abilities can play it and love it. The movements can easily be adapted to handicapped people's abilities. Often children with little or no speech will join in because the game does not appear to include speech. Most of the words or sounds are within the reach of many people considered non-verbal but who make sounds. The game was developed from my assumption that we all can become more conscious of the ways we "speak" to each other with our faces, our gestures, and our bodies. It is about physical expressiveness. The leader must be emphatic and clear in demonstrating that which is to be imitated. The script which follows is just a place to start. Change it; adapt it. Have the game evolve to include new things each time.

Big Feelings — Little Feelings (seated in a circle)

Watch me closely. If I make a face, you do the same. If I say a word, you repeat it. If I move my hand, you do the same.

Leader: (face and body dejected, disgusted) Oooooh *Noooo!*
Everyone: Ooooh *Noooo!* (mirroring the exact inflection and gesture)
Leader: (shaking head in disbelief, hand to head) No! no! no! no! no! no!
Everyone: (mirroring) No no no no no no!
Leader: (as if thinking of something vaguely hopeful, a faint smile, soft voice) Hey
Everyone: Hey
Leader: (a little more hopeful, sitting taller, bigger smile, a little louder) Hey!
Everyone: Hey
Leader: (looking around, louder, pretty sure now) Hey.
Everyone: Hey!
Leader: (joyous, body erect, hands out-stretched, loudly) *Hey!*
Everyone: Hey!
Leader: (ecstatic, shouting, hands in celebration over head) *Hey!!*
Everyone: *Hey!*
Leader: (changing quickly, a terrible discovery, body collapsing down in despair) Oh *no!!*

Everyone: Oh *no!!*
Leader: (softly, defensively, almost indignantly) Hey!
Everyone: Hey!
Leader: (louder, angry looking, more indignant, looking at someone in the group) Hey!
Everyone: *Hey!*
Leader: (almost threatening, body more defensive) *Hey!!*
Everyone: *Hey!!*
Leader: (something dawning, scratching head) Ah Oh!
Everyone: Ah Oh!
Leader: (sure now, sing song, pointing at someone else) Ah Oh!
Everyone: Ah Oh!
Leader: (pointing, "Now I've caught you") Unh *Hunh!*
Everyone: Unh *Hunh!*
Leader: (pointing at someone else) Unh *Huhn!*
Everyone: Unh *Hunh!*
Leader: (pointing, louder) Unh *Hunh!!*
Everyone: Unh *Hunh!!*
Leader: (pointing at themself) Unh *Hunh!!* (body shrinking, apologetically) Ah Oh (softly)
Everyone: Unh *Hunh!* . . . Ah oh.
Leader: (Arms crossed stubbornly) Humpf! (this sound is made with mouth closed through the nose)
Everyone: Humpf!
Leader: (above it all, haughtily) Humpf!
Everyone: Humpf!
Leader: (mocking) Oh yeah?
Everyone: Oh yeah?
Leader: (louder, more defensive) Oh, yeah?!
Everyone: Oh yeah?!
Leader: (as if nose to nose, defiant) Oh Yeah?!!
Everyone: Oh yeah?!!
Leader: (clenched fists, through teeth) Oooo! I'd like to. . .
Everyone: Ooooo! I'd like to. . .
Leader: (more frustrated) I'd like to. . . !
Everyone: I'd like to. . .
Leader: (wide-eyed, surprised, pointing to self) Who? Me?
Everyone: Who? Me?
Leader: (shocked) Me?!!
Everyone: Me?
Leader: (accepting it easily) Oh . . . ok!
Everyone: Oh . . . ok!
Leader: (looking ashamed) I'm sorry.
Everyone: I'm sorry.
Leader: Let's shake (shaking hand with neighbor)

Everyone: Let's shake.
Leader: I'm *glad!* (looking happy)
Everyone: I'm glad!
Leader: Let's clap! (clapping hands)
Everyone: Let's clap!
Leader: Stop! (gestures)
Everyone: Stop!
Leader: Hand over mouth — waves goodbye.
Everyone: (waves goodbye)

BUBBLE GUM GAME

TO DEVELOP: *Observation Skills (listening, seeing)
*Imitation (doing the same)
*Cooperation
*Success
*Self-Control (waiting for one's turn)
*Awareness of Self and Others
*Expressive Skills
*Pantomime
*Imagination (pretend)

This game can be played as a continuation of Big Feelings — Little Feelings or as a self-contained experience.

It can be played at tables or desks, in a circle, sitting or standing. It is an excellent transitional game for students just beginning to pretend. Because it is based on imitation, even those children who do not yet pretend can experience the "magic" by following along. After the enthusiasm for playing the game "as is" has dwindled, try changing to a "surprise package," wrapped with paper and ribbon. The package might include a toy or a scary creature which grows bigger and bigger, or jelly beans (which, after being eaten, turn out to be jumping beans).

Include lots of sensory details to make the "pretend" apply more to real life (the smell of things, the texture, the size, the shape, the weight, the taste, the sound, the temperature, the resilience).

Bubble Gum

Leader: In this game you must do the same as I. If I make a face, you do the same. If I move my hands, you do the same. (Stretched hands out forward, away from body-palms up.)

Everyone: (does the same)

Leader: (pulls elbows in towards stomach)

Everyone: (does the same)

Leader: (draws in air through teeth quickly, arms bend at elbow, hands snap up to either side of the face)

Everyone: (does the same)

Leader: (while making a z-z-z-z sound, hands glide upward until completely extended above head)

Everyone: (same)

Leader: (on a quick, hard 'tshh" the palms point forward, fingers apart)

Everyone: (same)

Leader: (arms begin to slowly melt down until hands clap together on lap as if holding something very special)

Everyone: (same)

Leader: (peeks into cupped hands secretively)

Everyone: (same)

Leader: (draws in breath and looks surprised and delighted)

Everyone: (same)

Leader: (repeats the action until all understand and can mirror it; pulls hands close to chest, so no one can see)

Everyone: (same)

Leader: Oh boy! (holding it close, ecstatic)

Everyone: (same)

Leader: (looks for a place to hide it, up sleeve, in pants leg, pocket, or underneath legs) Shhh!!!

Everyone: (same)

Leader: Did you get something special? I did *too!* I'll bet I know what some of you found. Some money? A bug? A new pet? Or maybe some candy? I'll tell you what. I'm going to tell you what *I* got, I *got* a handful of bubble gum and I'm gonna share it with you. Are you allowed to chew bubble gum in school? Well, this kind you can, because it is "pretend" bubble gum and I think you'll like it. I've got all colors, so you hold out your hand. I'll give each of you one. Now don't chew it yet. We'll all chew it together. I've got a blue bubble gum for you (puts pretend gum in someone's hand and lifts their fingers around). Now hang on tight. Don't chew it yet. And I've got a pink bubble gum for you (makes up a little lilting chant after everyone understands the process, then moves along giving it out rather quickly). A green one for you, a yellow one for you, and I've got a black one for me. Are you ready to open up those hands and chew this super juicy fantastic elastic pretend bubble gum? Then let's open our fingers and pick it up

and put it in our mouths. My gum is juicy, is yours? Umm! Pretty good for pretend, hum? My gum is over here now, where is yours (pushes tongue in cheek to make a bulge)? Now it's over on this side. Let's see yours. Can you do this with your tongue? Push it out here and it makes it look like gum. Let's chew it up well, because I want to blow a super bubble. Do you? Are you ready to blow? Let's put our fingers up here to show how big the bubble gets. Take a deep breath and blow (hands expand as bubble gets bigger). Shall we blow it bigger? Take a deep breath and blow! Pretty big bubble. Do you think it will break if we blow it more? Let's try. Bigger and bigger . . . (hands clap together to make the sound of bubble breaking) Ohhh Nooo! It's all over our faces. Look! You've got some on your cheek. Pull it off! Oh look, there's more on your eyebrow, pull if off. Oooo, it's sticky. It's sticking to my fingers. We can stretch it way out. We can let it swing. Let's see if we can roll it into a ball. Now what do we do with it? Shall we put it in our pockets? Stick it on our noses? On the bottom of our shoes? I know. I've got just the thing (pulls out a paper bag). Do you think you could throw it into this bag? Let's try. (Places three fingers in bag; little finger and thumb remain out of bag; as each child throws, the leader snaps thumb and middle finger, the bag between them, and the bag jumps and makes the sound of something landing inside.) Hold your gum. Get ready, set, throw! Hey! How did you do that? Let's see if *you* can do it. Ready, set, throw. Hey! What's going on here? Let's see if *you* can do it if I hold it way up here (tries it up high, far across the room, behind back, yet everyone succeeds). Now everyone has thrown his gum away, and I've got a whole bag of chewed up gum. Let's put this away.

Optional Ending — To extend the game, the leader can throw each piece of gum back, helping the students cup their hands, make a clapping sound as the gum is caught. "Ready, set, catch!" Thus giving everyone a chance to throw the gum in the bag again.

The other option is to bring back the "surprises" that each child originally found, then hid away. Everyone does something with this surprise that might give the others a clue as to what it is. Each child gets a turn and others guess.

"WHO DO YOU THINK YOU ARE?"

TO DEVELOP: *Self-Control
*Cooperation
*Awareness of Self and Others
*Expressive Skills
*Observation Skills
*Concentration
*Social Awareness

This game was devised to give students a chance to use the voice and body in a big and aggressive way while including the opposite (a quiet, retiring attitude). It turns out that it dredges up many emotional issues, memories, and responses (embarrassment, threat, fear, and self-control).

The first few times it is played, the students will need to laugh and giggle in order to accommodate the feelings this game seems to stir. They will request playing it again and again. (Apparently to gain some mastery over the feelings.) Each time through the game, you can ask more and more of them (to threaten, to keep a straight face, to use a "new" voice). Be patient. Even though it is a game, it touches "soft" spots. Allow for the possibility that some students may be able to play the pushy and aggressive side but have too fragile a dignity to allow someone else to threaten them. They will cover this with much laughter or will look smug rather than fearful. Remind them often that it is a *game*. Demonstrate the "fearful" posture and facial expression often, asking them to imitate. Be physically close to the action (move around the circle with the game). Use physical contact. Remind them this is pretend, a game, just for fun. Congratulate success or "good trys" profusely. Eventually the players should be able to handle the anxiety and play both parts realistically.

Long after you have tired of the game, the students will savor the experience and will request playing it again.

"Who Do You Think You Are?!!

In this game I turn to the person on my right and look "real mean" and say, in the biggest, meanest voice I can make, "Who do you think you *are?!*" That person pretends he is very afraid and leans back with big eyes and says, "Who, me?" I answer even louder, *"Yeah, you!"* Then he says, "I'm _____." (He says his real name.) As soon as we hear him say his name, we all pretend that we just recognized him and say, "Oh yes, of course, it's _____." And as we repeat his name we give him a big round of applause. When he hears the applause, he feels pretty strong and decides to try out his voice on the person to his right. He stretches as tall as he can, leans forward, makes a fierce face and sneers, *"Who* do you think you are?" His neighbor answers, and we call out *his* name and applaud. Everyone gets a

chance to use a big voice and pretend to be mean and also to pretend to be afraid of the person asking the question. It is important that everyone remembers this is a *game* and we are *pretending*. We may lean over someone but *cannot touch*. Everyone must try to keep a straight face and make it look real. Let's try it once around the circle.

The script for students with limited speech may be left the same, and the leader may say the lines as the students physicalize the feeling. Students will sometimes chime in with parts of the phase ("Who . . . you are!?). Or the script can be adapted: "Who are you?" or "Hey you!"

I'M THE KING OR QUEEN OF THIS WHOLE LAND

TO DEVELOP: *Self-Confidence
*Body Awareness
*Sharing
*Taking Turns
*Cooperation
*Expressive Skills

Some practice with "postures" will help to warm up into this game.

Stand or sit like a gun-fighter, a teacher, a clown, a ballet dancer, a baby, a monster, etc. If possible, allow the students to move around as these characters would. Have each type of character eat a sandwich or comb his hair. Point out differences in how they stand, move, react. Have everyone try the posture, gesture, and the facial expression of a king or queen. Have them parade in a circle, where possible. The leader starts the game. From then on, the leader moves with the action to assist, side-coach, and cajole. There will be some giggling and some initial embarrassment. Encourage all "royalty" to stand tall, look proud. All "subjects" *must* bow to all "royality."

I'm the King or Queen of this Whole Land

I get into the middle of the circle and look very proud and raise my hands to say, "I'm the king of this whole land! Bow down to me!" Everyone in the circle repeats again and again, "Oh great King, Oh great King" and bows down. Then Sally (my neighbor) walks out and taps me on the shoulder and says, "Excuse me. Wait a minute!" I say, "Yes, what's the matter?" She answers, "You can't be the King!" I

look surprised and say, "Why not?" She stands tall and raises her arms and says, "Because I'm the Queen of this whole land. Bow down to *me!*" Everyone bows down saying, "Oh, *she's* the Queen, Oh Great Queen, Great Queen. . ." This is interrupted by George (her neighbor to the right), who taps her and says, "Excuse me. Wait a minute.'.'. and so forth around the circle. When everyone has had a turn I interrupt the last king or queen and say, "Wait a minute, wait a minute. There can't be this many kings and queens in one land. Are you king of this land? How about you; are you the real king? Well if *you're* the king and *you* also are the king, what shall we do. Who shall bow down if we are *all* kings and queens?" The children decide on the solution and try it to end the game.

Adaptations

The phrase "I'm the Queen . . ." can be shortened. The leader can speak as the student mimes. The game can include a crown which is passed on when the "monarch" is de-throned. The game can be played while seated around a table.

POSSOM

TO DEVELOP: *Self-Control
*Awareness of Self and Others
*Concentration
*Taking Turns
*Self-Confidence

The leader must allow for some wiggling and squirming the first few times through the game. Remember that this fits right into children's fear-fantasy of being eaten. It is therefore scary but compelling and allows them, in a playful atmosphere, to test out their courage and skill and, eventually, to master their feelings surrounding the fear. So the leader must be blind to some movement early on. As you go or before the game, practice the skills of remaining floppy and completely limp. Use the words "great," "fantastic," "good job" many times to reinforce. The students' skills in control will develop startlingly fast. With this pretended "threat," even the most hyper child will make dramatic headway to avoid getting caught. You will have to be very sensitive to your group to know just how threatening the wolf should be. If too threatening, the students will not be able to control themselves. If not threatening enough, the game will be boring. A point of concentration (looking at one spot on the floor) seems to be the key to the students' ability to block out the stimuli.

Possom

Does anyone here know what a possom looks like? It is about the size of a cat, has shaggy, grey fur, a long hairless tail, a long pointy nose (pink on the tip), and little

beady eyes. Bigger animals sometimes like to eat possoms. But possoms don't like that very much; so possoms have learned how to pretend. If a big wolf comes by looking for his supper, our friend the possom will fall right over on its side and lie very still . . . just as if it were dead. Its eyes don't move, nor do its feet. It doesn't even wiggle its nose. Well the wolf sniffs the possom and pokes it with his paw and says, "Is this possom dead? I don't want any dead possom. I want some fresh meat." The possom doesn't move an eyelash. It doesn't even look like it is breathing. So the wolf stamps off grumbling. When the wolf is gone, the possom opens one eye, looks around, and laughs and laughs because he has fooled the wolf by pretending to be dead. People call that "playing possom." Here is how we'll play. Everyone sits in a circle. I'll be the wolf. If I come close to you, you must sit very still, look at one spot on the floor, do not laugh. If the wolf picks up your arm, you must let it be very limp and floppy. When he lets it go, let it plop back down by itself (just like a "dead" possom). Even if I talk to you or ask a question, don't move or answer. Just stare at your spot on the floor. Let's begin.

The wolf says, "Boy, I sure am hungry for some breakfast. Ah oh! I think I found a delicious possom to eat. Humm, this possom is not moving. I'll move around here to the front and sniff to see if she smells alive. I'll lift up this paw and shake it to see if it's floppy. Yep, it sure is floppy. This possom doesn't move, doesn't smile. I think this possom is dead. Uchh!! I don't want old dead meat. I'll go looking for some fresh possom."

If the possom has succeeded in remaining relatively still, before I go on to someone else I touch him and whisper he's done a great job and ask him to relax and watch the rest of the game.

If a possom does smile, laugh, or move, the wolf says, "Did I see this possom move just now? I couldn't have seen it smile, could I? If I did, I guess I was just imagining."

If the possom does obviously move or smile, the wolf says, "Oh boy, now I've got some fresh possom. Oh boy, yum, yum." As wolf, I gently encircle the seated possom with my arms (from behind) and slowly, gently pivot them around. The whole while I am smacking lips, ad-libbing about how delicious this possom is. When possom is "eaten" I whisper, "Okay you may relax and watch the game from here."

If too many students are opting to be eaten, I make it less attractive by pulling them gently away from the circle as I "eat" them, pivoting them partially away, then just thanking them in a whisper. This is not an obvious exclusion but makes it more difficult to feel a part of the rest of the game.

When the wolf has checked out every possom he stops and says, "Wait a minute! What's that I hear. (The children may make stomping sounds.) It sounds like someone walking. They're coming this way! I think it's a bunch of hunters. Ah Oh! I've gotta get out of here. Good-bye, possom!" And the wolf runs off.

BIG APPLE

TO DEVELOP: *Concentration
*Listening Skills (following directions)
*Body Awareness
*Expressive Skills
*Imagination

The excitement of this game-story is generated through the sound pictures created by your voice. Stretch out words. Use soft and loud. Move your voice up the scale and down. Be *fully* expressive. The leader should demonstrate the action a first time through. Later the leader is just narrator. Stop the story and explore the ways to make the action look real: how does your hand look when really holding an apple; how can we make it look like we've just snapped it off the tree; how do we show that the worm wiggles? This does not require your having any experience with pantomime. This is not performance-oriented. It is merely a pretend experience which should seem real as possible through the details we chose to enhance it. The more sensory detail included, the more believable it is.

Big Apple

One bright sunny day as I was walking along, I whistled a little tune to myself. I kicked a tin can out of the way. All of a sudden I stopped, looked down and saw one beautiful flower. I leaned over and picked it. Umm, did it ever smell good! I looked at it closely, then smelled it deeply again. I think I'll just put this in a button hole or in my hair. There, that looks nice. Now I'll just walk a little farther. Nice day, no clouds, nothing to do but whistle, kick tin cans, and walk. What a beautiful tree up ahead. Looks like an apple tree. It is an apple tree, and hanging there on that low branch is a beautiful big apple. I'll just reach my hand up slowly, wrap my fingers round it and snap it off. Just look at that — a beautiful apple, almost perfect, except for one tiny hole. Oh well, I'll shine this apple up, (I turn it around and shine it on my shirt). Look there — I can see my face in it! Now for a big bite. (I sink my teeth in and snap it off a big bite.) Oh my, is that ever sweet and juicy. I'll have to wipe this juice off my chin, then chew and chew some more of this delicious lunch. Let's turn it around and take an even bigger bite. I sink my teeth in, snap it off, and chew, chew, chew. I wipe off my chin and get ready for an even bigger bite. I hold the apple, open my mouth wide, start down to the apple and *stop!* What is that in my apple? What is that in that hole? It looks like half a worm. Half a worm? Where is the other half then? Ah Oh, the other half is in my stomach. Yuk! Now what? Well, let's pick up this half of the worm. It's wiggling. I'll hold it as far away from myself as I can and drop it down on the ground. I'll step on it; oh no, I don't want it on the bottom of my shoe. Let it go. What shall I do with the apple? Maybe I'll got ahead and eat it. No, just thinking of a half worm in my stomach makes me stop and pitch the apple over my shoulder. Oh well, a beautiful sunny

day to take a walk and whistle a tune. I kick a tin can out of the way then stop to watch a butterfly land on a dandelion then fly away.

Adaptations

There is nothing magical about the story as it is. It can be adapted, added to, changed completely. Handicapped students especially deserve and need the stimulus provided by imaginative games. They need not be able to do the refined illusions that others can do. Their fingers need not be able to wrap around the "pretend" apple. The experience of pretending to extend their fingers is joy enough and real enough. The brain is stimulated in pretend situations as efficiently as in real ones.

The journey can change drastically each time the game is played. New things can be found and explored (a cow, a baby bird, an extinct animal, a magical box, a creature which changes shapes, etc.).

Students may eventually want to be the tour guide and narrate what is happening. Fantastic. Let them, of course!!

SNOW BABY — NO BABY

TO DEVELOP: *Trust
*Cooperation
*Listening Skills (following directions)
*Self-Control
*Imagination
*Expressive Skills
*Body Awareness

The group is divided in half. One half forms a line along one wall of the room. This group will be the sculptors. The other half (the snow people) crouch along the opposite wall. As in the preceding game, the drama of the story is created by your voice. The magic of this game is that a real sense of privacy develops between the snow sculptor and each snow person. The students forget that others too are enacting the story. They are the "stars." There is, in fact, a sense that *they* are making up the story by creating it as they go along. Your voice becomes invisible if their concentration is complete. The leader should demonstrate as a sculptor the first time through. Use side-coaching to provide an atmosphere in which they can experience trust and control. ("Remember this is a person. Move the arms gently. We will not touch their real face. Let's push the pine cones out here away from their real face. *Ease* the snow baby up. Remember, we are pretending this is a real person. We must look after them.") Be specific about when to touch and when not to touch.

The mother is imaginary. No props are used. All objects are pantomimed. The snowbabies are first clumps of snow, then they are eased and shaped until they are upright. They may rest (drop the character) while the sculptors are in school.

Snow Baby — No Baby

Sculptors act out the following:

One winter morning, I awake all curled up under my blankets, hearing my mother call, "Get up its time to get dressed. The school bus will be here soon. Wake up now!" I don't want to get out from under these warm cozy blankets. I pull them over my head and go back to sleep for a while until I hear my mother call, "Breakfast is ready." So, I throw back the covers and step out on the cold, cold floor in my bare feet and begin to dress for school. First I put on some warm pants. Then I put on a warm sweater. Then my socks and shoes. I stop. "I wonder if it snowed last night. I think I'll go out and see." I put on my heavy coat, gloves, some boots, a scarf, and a warm hat. I open the door, and, to my surprise, it has snowed so much that the snow has piled halfway up the door. It is beautiful. I have to step very high to move through it. The snow covers everything, like whipped cream on the trees, on roof tops . . . everywhere. (Sculptors approach partner from other group. Snow people respond to movements of sculptor.)

What perfect snow to make a snow baby. I'll make a tight, hard snow ball and begin to roll it and pat it. Piling on more and more snow. I trip to form a clump as tall as I. Then I gently shape the waist and shoulders, then a head. I step back to have a look. Not bad! But it will need arms. I'll find some sticks. Then I can make the arms look any way I want. Let's try the arms up. Or maybe one up and one down. There that looks like a snow baby. Now it will need a face. I'll find some stones and pine cones and place them gently to make a perfect face. It looks almost real. But something is still missing. I know, it needs a hat and maybe a scarf. I'll take off my own and put it on the snow baby. There, that looks just great. It looks real enough to speak. I must go inside now to eat my breakfast. I trudge through the snow, open the door, stomp the snow off my feet. Let's take a look through the window to see what my snow baby looks like from here. Just as I look out, the snow baby looks at me and winks, smiles, and begins to move around. I can't believe my eyes. I quickly call to my mother, "Mother! Mother! Come here quickly!" My mother runs in from the other room and looks out the window where I point. And just as my mother looks, the snow baby stops. My mother says, "Oh you made a snow person. It's lovely. Now come to breakfast." I say, "But, Mother, that snow baby just winked and smiled and moved around." My mother looks sternly and says, "I don't have time for your stories! Now come and eat."

She walks away. And just as soon as she does, that snow baby winks again and lifts a stick arm to wave and begins to dance around. I call, "Mother! Mother! Come quick! It's doing it again!" My mother rushes in again and looks out, and, just as she looks, the snow baby stops. She says, "I don't like your lying to me. Now stop all this and come to breakfast!" Just then the school bus pulls up outside my house. No time for breakfast! So, I shout good-bye to my mother, trudge through the

snow past my snow baby. I shake my fist and shout "Now you've done it! My mother's mad at me for lying. I didn't have time for breakfast, and now I don't even have a hat or scarf. Some friend you are!"

The snow person just smiles and gives a wink as I jump on the bus. The bus drives away up the hills, over the bumps, down the hills, to the right and to the left, over some bumps, and finally comes to a stop at school. We all get out and go inside. We all sit at our desks and write and write all day. It was test day. We write so much that none of us even look out to see that a bright sun is shining warmly in the sky. And you know what happens to snow babies when the sun gets too warm! They begin to melt, one drip at a time. Arms melting, drip, drip. Faces melting, drip. Smiles melting to a frown. Drip shoulders, down, down, slowly melting to the ground.

Finally, the school bell rings, and we grab our coats and books and get on the bus to go home. The bus takes us up the hills, over the bumps, down the hills, to the right and to the left, over a hill and home again. It stops and I get out to have another look at my snow baby. Trudging through the snow, I look at the place where it had been, but there is nothing. Maybe it has run away. The snow baby is gone. I am sad. I pick up my soaking hat and scarf, and, just as I turn to go inside, I look into the puddle again. There at the bottom lay the stones and pine cones I had used to make its face. And I could swear that just for a second they look at me and smile and wink good-bye.

Adaptations

Handicapped students may do all of the story (moving as they are able). The story can be changed seasonally to include an experience at the beach, making sand castles, or creatures that eventually move and walk or are washed away by the tides. The story might feature the building of a secret hide-away (a fort, a teepee, a corn shack, hut, a lean-to or a tent). The builder could imagine sounds outside and find evidence that "the enemy" is near-by. The successful construction or creation of anything is a very edifying experience, whether done in reality or moved-through in pantomime. Vary the story. Make up your own!!

FLYING CATERPILLARS

TO DEVELOP: *Listening Skills
*Body Awareness
*Imagination
*Self-Control
*Self-Image
*Trust

This story game is pantomimed to the teacher's narration. All students enact the story at the same time. The leader should participate and demonstrate the first

time through. The songs can be chanted rather than sung. They need not have a tune that can be repeated. They ought to have rhythm and inflection.

The story deals with transformation (something all people wonder about, wish for, and perhaps fear). It allows students to pretend their way through a dramatic change that is natural and ultimately liberating. It reminds us that change is not only possible but also inevitable. It allows us to try the journey from the familiar to the unknown and to have success. All this in the safe confines of a "play" situation. The story may appear to be most appropriate for young children. I recommend its use with any age students, especially adolescents who are experiencing subtle and sometimes sudden transformations of their own. Often a comment like, "This is just for being silly" or "This probably won't teach us much; it's just for fun," will remove the students' need to hang on to their fragile dignity so tightly and encourage them to give it a try.

The leader should play the rooster and allow the student caterpillars to wiggle between his/her legs, barely making it before they are caught. It may require a lot of ad-libbing to allow for enough time to let each caterpillar escape. ("Hey, what is that down there; I think it might be a _____. I'm gonna get it.") You might grab at the feet and not be successful at holding on. The experience of confounding or confusing the leader is the basis for a lot of the fun, so be thoroughly confounded and completely frustrated at having lost your "breakfast."

Flying Caterpillars

All the little caterpillars were sound asleep wrapped in their leaf blankets one morning when all of a sudden they heard Boomer, the rooster, crow at the rising sun. It was time to get up. They slowly yawned and stretched as they took off their blankets and immediately felt hungry. Caterpillars sure like to eat! This morning they would start off by eating some grass. Chomp! Chomp! Chomp! went their little caterpillar chompers. Delicious green grass for breakfast. But that didn't fill them up. They moved on to some dandelions. Chomp! Chomp! Chomp! Very good and tasty, but that didn't fill them up. How about some yummy roses? Chomp! Chomp! Chomp! But they were still hungry. So the only thing to do was to head for the garden — over there, through that fence. There they would find scrumptious lettuce, juicy tomatoes, crispy cabbage, and more, more, more. They started off for the garden, singing their favorite song: "I like to wiggle and crawl on my belly. I like to eat cabbage and strawberry jelly. I like to eat apples. I like to eat berries. My favorite thing is a bowl full of cherries. I can't eat enough. Chomp! Chomp! *Chomp!*"

They arrived at the garden gate, and there, guarding the garden, was old Boomer, the rooster. Well, everyone knows that roosters love to eat caterpillars, so the caterpillars stopped and lay low in the grass. Boomer hopped off the fence to look a little closer. He said, "I could have sworn that I heard some caterpillars singing and thought I saw some wiggling in this grass. Let me look closer."

The caterpillars did not move. Luckily they were green caterpillars, just the color

of grass, so old Boomer Rooster didn't see them. He said, "I must have been imagining things. Oh well, it's a beautiful day today. I'll just look up at that lovely sun and flap my wings and sing a rooster song. "Cock-a-doodle-doodle!" The caterpillars knew that they had just one chance to get into the garden past the old rooster. They would have to wait for just the right moment. Just as Boomer raised his head and flapped his wings to sing, one little caterpillar might be able to crawl through the rooster's legs and get inside — that is, *if* he wiggled fast enough. If he *didn't*, Boomer would get a caterpillar snack. So each one waited his turn in line. Boomer said, "I just can't help crowing at that beautiful sun today. I love to raise my head and flap my wings and sing "Cock-a-doodle-doodle." One caterpillar had just slipped through when Boomer cried, "Wait a minute. What is that? I think it is a _____. No I guess not. I'll just sing a little more." And so the morning went on. Each caterpillar just wiggling through in time. Finally all the caterpillars were safe behind Boomer, eating their favorite foods in the garden. Oh my, what a feast! They ate cauliflower, radishes, carrots, corn, cucumbers, squash, and who knows what else. They ate until their bellies could hold no more. None of them could crawl very fast. Besides, they were sleepy after their feast. It wouldn't be safe to try to get past old Boomer while they were so stuffed and sleepy. Surely some of them would get caught. If only they could fly! But everyone knows that caterpillars have no wings. There was only one thing to do. They would wrap themselves up in cabbage leaf blankets and sleep until darkness came. Then they'd crawl home safely. Each caterpillar found a leaf that would keep him warm, then wrapped himself tightly all around. Then the caterpillars drifted off to the sweetest of dreams. And in their dreams they didn't have to crawl or wiggle. These caterpillars dreamed that they could fly. They smiled in their sleep as they dreamed. They slept longer than they had ever slept before. Days went by, and the caterpillars still lay curled in their leaves smiling at their dreams. Suddenly there was a loud sound. "Cock-a-doodle-doodle!" All the caterpillars knew who that was and began to yawn and stretch and unwrap themselves. When they were finished unwrapping they looked down and opened their arms wide, and, lo and behold, they had wings! Wonderful, beautiful colorful wings! While they were asleep, the caterpillars had changed into butterflies. Could they fly? They tried. They opened the wings wide then closed them; open, closed, open, closed, higher, higher in the air, until all the butterflies were high above the garden. They looked down as they flew and saw old Boomer watching them. He couldn't catch them, way up here. The butterflies sang as they flew: "I can fly! I can fly! I can fly anywhere that I want to. Way up high! In the sky. I can fly, fly, fly!" No more crawling, no more wiggling, and no more chomping. They spent all day flying from one beautiful flower to another, drinking the sweet juice from deep inside the petals. Free to fly and sip the whole day long.

Adaptations

Caterpillars can each wrap up in a sheet or piece of fabric and unfold slowly, then use the sheets as wings to fly around the room. Having three or four sheets will move the game along. After the butterflies have soared, they can come in "for a landing" and give some other caterpillars a chance to transform. The sheets can be

painted with fabric dye, food coloring, or water color to make designs on the wings. At just the right moment, some lovely "flying music" can be played on the phonograph to enhance the magic. The children might want to make up a butterfly dance (all beginning in a circle and slowly unfolding, etc.). The children at Coalport Preschool with the aid of their teacher, Cathy, made and painted cabbages, carrots, celery, etc., out of rolled and crumpled newspapers. They each made a caterpillar head band complete with antennae and wings made of old curtains. A part of the group can sit with hands held together, making a cup-like flower from which the butterflies may drink the sweet juice.

DAY DREAMS

TO DEVELOP: *Relaxation
*Imagination
*Self-Control

The leader's voice sets the tone. Speak softly. Stretch out words, hanging to the vowel sounds. Don't be afraid to truly set a mood. Don't rush. Pause for seconds at a time. Leave time for the pictures to form in the students' minds. This is a wonderful exercise to bring a group "back down" if they are excited or have "cabin fever." It is not easy for children to trust closing their eyes for long periods. Some will not be able to do this part. They should try but should not be chastised for failing. Not being able to see can cause anxiety. Closing eyes also conjures up imagery associated with nap or bedtime. The blackness is like night and the pictures that emerge, until we learn to exercise some control of them, seen completely uncontrolled and sometimes too much like bad dreams. So it is important that students, in short segments of time, make friends with the darkness and discover that here they *can* have complete control. (An even more advanced skill is to trust that the pictures do not harm, need not be controlled, and can be a source of surprise and inspiration.) Give your students several trys before you decide whether or not they can handle these kinds of exercises. They gain something each time. The more familiar, the safer it all seems. Treat the exercise as a skill which must be learned. Give the students time. They will demonstrate their anxiety by giggling or peeking. Encourage them to try. Be supportive not threatening. If they cannot do the exercise today, drop it. Try it another day. Use touch or proximity to help individuals relax. Congratulate (in a whisper) even small successes. Use the words "safe, relax," often.

Day Dreams

Would you find a place to lie on the floor where you can stretch out on your back please. You should not be touching anyone else. We are going to do some daydreaming. Everyone get comfortable, arms at your side, eyes closed, and listen to my voice. I have built special boats called rafts for each of you. The rafts are floating in a beautiful stream. Each of you is on a different raft, lying down, eyes

closed, just relaxing. The sun is warm today, but not hot. The breeze is cool, but not cold. We're going to let the raft glide down the stream slowly. No one needs to steer it. It is a smooth ride. You feel good knowing that this is going to be a wonderful trip. Smooth, gliding, safe, riding past the grass growing on the bank, past the flowers — yellow, purple, pink and blue. Lovely flower smells are in the air. Gliding past the trees — small trees, tall trees with branches that stretch over the stream to make a green tunnel. We glide underneath and slowly pass the bunnies hopping on the shore, squirrels chatter "hello" to you, the sun feels wonderful and warm on your face and chest and legs. Nothing to do but glide, nothing to do but daydream. Your raft takes you slowly down the stream past beautiful sights to a secret place, a place only you know about. You can see it best with your eyes closed. In our dream, we can lie down or stand up or walk or run. In this secret place, we can do anything we want to. We can change the way things look. We can dream that our friends or family are along. We are the leaders of this dream. Anything we want, we get. Make a picture on a big screen, just the way you'd like it. Dream on. Take your time. When your raft is ready to take you back, I will let you know.

It is time to leave this secret place for now. We can come back again. Let's say good-bye to it. Lie back on the raft with your eyes still closed and let the secret place become dark and hidden again. Say good-bye as the raft glides smoothly back up the stream, slowly past the squirrels, under the leafy tunnel, past the bunnies, past the flower smells. Breathe the flower scent in deeply. Stretch and yawn. Stretch your legs. Stretch your arms, your neck. Stretch your feet. Stretch and feel the warm sun. We are back now. Let your eyes slowly open. Look around. We have left the raft and the stream behind for today. We'll come back again soon. Slowly sit up when you can.

Adaptations

There is nothing magical in the arrangement of this journey. Change it to suit your needs. Take the students on journeys they may not ever see in their lifetime. Take them back in fantasy to places you all have visited, recalling details and including all the senses in the memory. Go to fantastic places (Santa's workshops, the moon, inside a whale, under the ocean, or the top of a tree). Keep in mind that fantasy appears to have no controls and may raise anxiety levels. This however is not a reason to avoid it. It is an excellent reason to use it to explore areas of our lives that do concern, confuse, or frighten us. It all just calls for an extra sensitivity and respect. Take note of students fears. Talk about them. Include your own. See what you all can learn by gently nudging back the boundaries that restrict us and keep us from growing. Fantasies are gifts. They enrich our lives. Help your students befriend the darkness inside and discover it to be a playground which is safe, specific, and altogether fantastic!

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